



Family Deployment Supplement to the Connecticut Guardian

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A letter to Connecticut's Armed Forces and their families

Dear members of America's Armed Forces and their families:

Thank you for your service to our beloved nation! Your skill, training, and courage in the face of danger will protect our people and our children's generation from living in a world more dangerous than any we have known. Only Iraq's disarmament can protect us from an arms race in chemical and biological weapons and development of multiple al Qaeda-like organizations to deliver them. In such a world, freedoms we take for granted would be compromised by the police powers necessary to prevent terrorist actions, and the instruments of diplomacy and treaty-making would be useless to prevent the violence perpetrated by non-nation state terrorist organizations capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction.

I am also writing to thank the families whose support of our servicemen and women is so vital to their successes. Those who must go into harm's way need your strength and support, and will, I hope, feel our support as a people through the Congressional Resolution commending their excellence of performance, courage, and patriotism.

If we, working with more than 40 nations, eliminate Iraq's arsenal and al Qaeda-like organizations, and pursue those goals along with an unprecedented effort to resolve the conflict between Israel and Palestine, then the Middle East can begin to create the freedom and opportunity its people deserve.

Destroying terrorism is the first and necessary step. Destroying Iraq's arsenal, which is backed by a proven willingness to use it, and developing the tools to prevent terrorist organizations from succeeding, will open the road to solutions that will assure peace and prosperity for future generations around the world.

To the families: As the campaign to disarm Saddam Hussein continues, please know that I stand ready to aid you in any way I can. I am in constant contact with Connecticut-based military units and Armed Forces liaison officers. Please do not hesitate to call my Connecticut offices at (860) 223-8412 in New Britain or (203) 573-1418 in Waterbury if I or my staff can help answer your questions or address your concerns as the situation in Iraq develops.

I wish with all my heart that this war be speedy with as few casualties as possible, military and civilian. I have every confidence that America's men and women in uniform will perform their duty with honor and bravery, and I hope that they can return home safely to their families at the earliest possible moment.

With great respect and admiration,
Nancy L. Johnson
Member of Congress
Fifth District, Connecticut



Troop support mail policy stressed

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE NEWS RELEASE

To bolster force protection, the general public is urged not to send unsolicited mail, care packages or donations to service members forward deployed unless you are a family member, loved one or personal friend.

On Oct. 30, 2002, the Department of Defense (DoD) suspended the "Operation Dear Abby" and "Any Servicemember" mail programs due to force protection concerns. Although these programs provide an excellent means of support to friends and loved ones stationed overseas, they also provide an avenue to introduce hazardous substances or materials into the mail system from unknown sources. Unsolicited mail, packages and donations from organizations and individuals also compete for limited airlift space used to transport supplies, war-fighting materiel and mail from family and loved ones.

Recently, DoD has become aware of organizations and individuals who continue to support some form of the "Any Servicemember" program by using the names and addresses of individual servicemembers and unit addresses. These programs are usually supported by well-intentioned, thoughtful and patriotic groups who are simply unaware of the new risks facing deployed military forces. Some individuals and groups publicize the names and addresses of service members, ships or units on Web sites, with good intentions. The result, however, is a potential danger to the troops they wish to support.

DoD cannot support creative and well-intentioned efforts that defeat force protection measures, but can instead recommend alternatives to mail and donation programs. To show support to troops overseas, the following are recommended:

* Log on to the following Web sites to show support, to include greeting cards, virtual Thank You cards and calling card donations to help troops stay in contact with loved ones:

www.defendamerica.mil

www.usocares.org

www.us.army.mil

* Visit Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals and nursing homes. Volunteer your services to honor veterans who served in past conflicts.

Mail from family members and loved ones has always been encouraged and the military mail system will continue to work hard to get that mail to servicemembers overseas.



SIX STAGES OF THE DEPLOYMENT CYCLE

Dealing with the stress of deployment is much easier when you understand why you possess the feelings that you have. There is an emotional cycle that loved ones of deploying soldiers pass through as a result of their separation. Six stages describe this cycle, from before deployment to the soldier settling back into his or her "normal" life: 1) Anticipation of Loss, 2) Emotional Disorganization, 3) State of Equilibrium, 4) Anticipation of Reunion, 5) Readjustment, and 6) a Final State of Equilibrium.

1 First is the Anticipation of Loss. Even before saying goodbye, detachment has begun. Emotional detachment makes physical detachment easier to handle. This is primarily why you may feel denial, shock, anger, frustration, and/or rejection. Arguing and bickering with your soldier is a normal, subconscious way of distancing yourself to avoid the pain upon separation. Ideas to lessen the friction and cope with the impending loss are to both set some goals to accomplish, before, during, and after the deployment; and also to communicate fully and thoroughly about everything on your mind.

2 Second is Emotional Disorganization. You may feel despair, loneliness, confusion, sleeplessness, irritable, and overwhelmed at the responsibility that rests on you now. This may only last 2 - 4 weeks. Your deployed soldier is probably feeling the same, so talk with him/her about your similar feelings. Although you may feel out of control, there are some active steps that can help. Work on the goals you had set prior to the deployment. Keep a journal of your accomplishments, setbacks and thoughts. Meet with others in your situation, such as spouses, mothers, and significant friends of other deployed soldiers. Their stories will show you how well they can cope, or in other instances how well you are coping. Helping them might help you, too.

3 After a time you will reach a State of Equilibrium. You will start feeling confident and self-assured in your new

routine. Goals will start being accomplished and you'll believe you've adjusted. But remember that you may feel mildly depressed and anxious for this to be all over. Celebrate the half-way point. Maintain contact with your soldier, even if you think you can last a week without him/her. Remember your support systems: Family and Friends, as well as your National Guard Family Assistant Center and Family Readiness Group.

4 Stage four is the Anticipation of Reunion. Homecoming is just around the corner and you may have feelings of joy, hope, and excitement, but also apprehension. You may want to keep your routines that you've developed. You may wonder if you'll be the same as a couple/family again. You may wonder if you'll live up to the expectations of your soldier. Against these worries, consider all that you have accomplished, but avoid condemning yourself or your soldier for unfinished goals. Reread your journal to invoke old feelings and to understand. Don't be unrealistic about your expectations of the reunion. Realize that having been apart did not solve any problems that were present before the deployment.

5 Readjustment. The most stressful stage can be the one most ignored. After all, you're soldier is home, shouldn't everything be great? "Your Car" and "Your Home" must become "Our Car" and "Our Home" again. It is common to feel ecstasy and relief, but also disappointment and guilt for unmet expectations. A "Second Honeymoon" may have begun upon his/her arrival, but remember that months of readjustment are following before you fall back into a peaceful State of Equilibrium - stage six.

These reminders of what is happening will help you through the deployment, but remember to face issues that were present before the deployment and support each other however you can. And ALWAYS, remember that most importantly - COMMUNICATION is the key.

-For more resources or if you have any questions, please call the Family Program Office - 1-800-858-2677.

Handyperson Hotline established for families and volunteers

Not deployed? Want to help? call the Handyperson Hotline at (860) 209-0770.

Calling all soldiers and airmen, retirees or spouses. This is your opportunity to stop being a spectator and start doing something to help the Connecticut Army and Air National Guard during these unprecedented times.

Volunteer to donate some of your time and expertise to the CTNG Family Program's Handyperson Center. If you are a tradesman or an all around handyperson or a laborer, the Handyperson Center is looking for you!

E-mail your name, phone number skill, status (active, retired, spouse) and hometown to Sgt. Maj. Toby Cormier at toby.cormier@ct.ngb.army.mil or call (860) 209-0770.

The Handyperson Hotline is designed to reduce the stressors on the families of deployed soldiers and airmen by having everyday household problems diagnosed and repaired or referred to competent businesses at no cost for labor.

The program is also designed to get seasonal chores such as window air conditioners installed/removed, pools opened/closed, leaves removed, items brought to the dump and so on.

All of this can be performed by fellow Guardsmen, retirees or spouses of Guardsmen who are willing to donate their time and expertise to this program.

Here's how the program works:

A deployed family member calls the Handyperson Hotline with a clogged drain.

The Hotline manager contacts a plumber from the Handyperson Database who will contact the family member and attempt to walk the person through correcting the problem (if possible.)

If not corrected, the Hotline will dispatch a qualified person (fellow Guardsman) to the house to correct the problem. Upon completion, the Hotline will record the problem and take action to correct it.

The program is not designed to get planned projects like installing a deck, finishing off a basement, painting or roofing the house.

It is designed to give the deployed family somewhere to turn to keep the home operating smoothly without having to pay to get things done around the house that were normally done by the deployed soldier or airman.

To volunteer or for more information, call (860) 209-0770 today.

Attention Soldiers, Airmen and Families The Connecticut Guardian wants your photos!

If you have photos you wish to share with the rest of our Guard family, we would like to publish them in the Guardian. We are looking for photos of soldiers and airmen who are deployed either relaxing or working. We are looking for photos of family members at home or at play. We are looking for photos of families packing care packages to send to their loved ones.

We will print them in the Guardian as space allows so they can be seen and shared by Connecticut Soldiers, Airmen and families around the world.

Please e-mail your photos to ctguardian@ct.ngb.army.mil



Spec. Andrew Bakulski of Company G, 104th Aviation Regiment, relaxes for a few moments at his mobilization station. Bakulski and his unit members have been mobilized in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and are receiving additional training at Fort Drum, N.Y. (Photo courtesy of Company G, 104th Aviation Regiment)

Handyperson Hotline
(860) 209-0770
Call today to volunteer your skills

Caution: NACEC.org Website

CAUTION: This website may be used for information gathering on US soldiers and family members for nefarious purposes.

The NACEC.org website is claiming to provide emergency notifications in order to support military families.

This site requests; service members' names, addresses, Social Security Numbers (SSN) as well as the names and addresses of family members, and other privacy act information.

The site also requests the service member to provide the content of a message, which is to be sent to family members.

To quote the website: "With the drastically increasing numbers of U.S. Armed Forces overseas, the North American Center for Emergency Communications (NACEC) has put their military family support "Flash Mail Service" back on line, as of this week (27 Feb 03).

This will help those members of the military stationed overseas and the military families that have members serving overseas."

This website is not associated with the

federal government and should not be trusted.

The site represents itself as being owned by a not-for-profit corporation (which means they have not filed for a non-profit status and made the necessary disclosures).

The registrant for the website is an individual in Minnesota who may or not be an American National.

DoD personnel should not enter any personal information on a non-federal website for emergency notification of families or any other reason.

Any information provided to this site could be used for identity theft, intelligence gathering by a foreign nation or terrorists and could pose a threat to service members, their families and their privacy.

Soldiers should use the Army Knowledge Online (AKO) as an official channel for communications between them and their family members: www.us.army.mil.

(This information is taken from an email message from the Information Assurance Manager, PERSCOM).

NOW 'EAR THIS!
Breakfast with the
Easter Bunny
Saturday, April 19th, 2003
Camp Rowland, Niantic, CT
Call 1-800-858-2677 to RSVP
Reservations are accepted through Monday, April 6th
Times will be announced
Meet the Easter Bunny
Easter Egg Hunt by Age Group
Bring Your Own Easter Basket
Adults, Please be sure to
have a photo ID to
enter Camp Rowland

New TRICARE policies for family members announced

Dr. William Winkenwerder, Jr., assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, and Thomas F. Hall, assistant secretary of defense for reserve affairs, announced policy changes that will enhance the TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Prime Remote (TPR) programs for members of the National Guard and Reserves and their family members.

Starting March 10, 2003, Guard and Reserve family members, if their sponsor is on active duty (federal) orders for more than 30 days, became eligible to enroll in TRICARE Prime and enjoy the access standards and cost shares associated with the Prime benefit.

"Previously, sponsors had to be eligible in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) and activated for 179 days or more before family members were eligible to enroll in TRICARE Prime," Winkenwerder said. "The Department of Defense (DoD) recognizes the contributions and sacrifices made by these families each and every day. Our commitment is to continue making improvements to the TRICARE benefit to enhance access and quality of care these families receive."

Guard and Reserve family members who reside with their sponsors in a TRICARE Prime Remote location at the time of the sponsor's activation can now enroll in the TRICARE Prime Remote for Active Duty Family Members (TPRADFM) program.

For family members to be eligible to enroll in the TPRADFM program, sponsors and their family members must reside at a location that is at least 50 miles or more in distance, or approximately a one-hour drive from the nearest military treatment facility (MTF). Sponsors and family members also must be identified as eligible in DEERS.

Contract changes are underway at TRICARE Management Activity to implement the new TPRADFM policy. Once the changes are accomplished, family members of the Guard and Reserve sponsors activated for more than 30 days may start using the TPRADFM benefit, which has no co-payments, deductibles or claim forms to file, and which offers providers who meet rigorous standards for providing quality health care.

Guard and Reserve family members who choose not to enroll in either the TRICARE Prime or TPRADFM program may still use the TRICARE Standard and Extra benefits, with applicable cost shares and deductibles.

Guard and Reserve sponsors need to verify that DEERS information for themselves and their family members is accurate and up-to-date. They are encouraged to contact DEERS at the Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office toll free at (800) 538-9552. Sponsors and family members may also update their addresses in DEERS on the TRICARE Web site at www.tricare.osd.mil

Family Assistance Center locations announced

Family Assistance Centers are being set-up in the following armories around the state:

Bristol Armory, 61 Center Street, Bristol, CT 06010 (860) 582-1206 Toll Free 866-347-2283 1st Lt. Lynda Hadenberg

Waterbury Armory, 64 Field Street, Waterbury, CT 06702 (203) 574-2406 Toll Free 866-347-2291 Sgt. Jonathon Duffy

Manchester Armory, 330 Main Street, Manchester, CT 06040 (860) 646-0780 Toll Free 866-347-2286 Sgt. 1st Class Dwight Frederick

Windsor Locks, AASF, Bradley International ARPT-BLDG 85-152, Route 75, Windsor Locks, CT 06096 (860) 627-7942 Toll Free 866-347-2292 1st Lt. Heidi Young

Groton - AVCRAD, 71 Tower Avenue, Groton, CT 06340 (860) 448-3346 Toll Free 866-347-3346 Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Ives

103rd FW, Bradley ANG Base, Bldg 8, East Granby, CT 06026 (860) 292-2730 Mrs. Donna Rivera

Newington SASC, 555 Willard Avenue, Building 2W, Newington, CT 06111 (860) 878-6723 (860) 878-6724 Toll Free 800-858-2677 Mrs. Kim Hoffman, Spec. Jessica McKenna and Staff Sgt. Christopher McCarty

Family Assistance Centers that still need staffing:

Branford Armory, 87 Montowese Street, Branford, CT 06405 (203) 481-3874 Toll Free 866-347-3351

Stratford Armory, 63 Amory Road, Stratford, CT 06614 (203) 375-8269 Toll Free 866-347-3356

Middletown Armory, 200 Main Street, Middletown, CT 06457 (860) 344-9201 Toll Free 866-347-3355

Norwich Armory, 38 Stott Avenue, Norwich, CT 06360 (860) 887-3911 Toll Free 866-347-3357

Volunteers will be needed in each facility, and those wishing to help out can contact Mrs. Kim Hoffman, Family Program Manager at 1-800-858-2677.

Any family member or loved one of a deployed soldier who has questions about benefits or deployment issues may also get answers to their question at the following email addresses:

kim.hoffman@ct.ngb.army.mil

or

julian.mueller@ct.ngb.army.mil

PITCH IN ON THE HOME FRONT.

There's lots you can do to help out while your parent is away.

JOBS AROUND YOUR HOME

include:

- setting the table
- emptying trash
- washing dishes
- feeding the pet(s)
- vacuuming
- dusting
- laundry
- cleaning your room
- yardwork
- collecting the mail

What other jobs can you think of?



Kids' Coloring Corner

A MONTHLY FEATURE
OF FUN AND
EDUCATIONAL
ACTIVITIES TO HELP
MILITARY CHILDREN
LEARN ABOUT
DEPLOYMENTS